RNA *For a Better Life in the Heights*

November 2002

RIVERVIEW *Neighborhood Association*

469 Palisade Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07307(201) 386-9481

RNA IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ORGANIZATION or ELECTED OFFICIAL

CLIFF-SIDE PROJECT

On October 31st representatives from RNA met with **Manhattan Builders** (developer) and the **Park Ave Design Group** (architect) for a presentation of revised drawings for the Cliff-Side project. At this time the community has four areas that are of major concern: 1) the traffic circulation of cars and pedestrians at the project's main entrance/exit at the base of Mountain Road/Paterson Plank Road, 2) the height variance being requested from the Palisade Preservation Overlay District (PPOD) due to the proposed additional stories on top of the existing structure, 3) the setback variance being requested from the PPOD that would allow the construction of a new building within 65 feet of the cliff base, and 4) the noise level that will be created by the heating/cooling units on the roof top and the inclusion of rooftop decks for tenant use.

There are revised drawings that address the entrance/exit traffic and rooftop noise. The height and setback variances are still being requested at this time. At the November 12th RNA meeting these revised drawings will be discussed along with the PPOD variances that are being requested. It is important that everyone be updated on these changes in order for RNA to take a formal position on this project before it is heard at the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

MURDER REDUX

[*On Sunday morning, October 27th, a resident of our community was murdered along Mountain Road on his way home from work. The victim was identified as Jose Pacheo, a 20 year old man who lived on Palisade Avenue. Mr. Pacheo worked as a dishwasher in a local restaurant in Hoboken. The County Prosecutor stated that he was attacked by a group of four men around 1.00 AM and stabbed multiple times throughout his body. Mr Pacheo was pronounced dead on arrival at St. Mary's Hospital in Hoboken.*

Unfortunately, this is not the first time that our community has experienced this type of violence. The following excerpt is reprinted from an article published in the November, 1999 RNA newsletter, titled "Murder on Mountain Road".]

"The headline sounds like one of those ever popular detective mysteries that people cannot read enough of. Unfortunately, it describes the horrifyingly real and untimely death of a local resident who happened to be at the wrong place at the wrong time. A local paper reported that Celso Roldan, age 59, of Hoboken wad beaten to death with his head bashed in. He was found on our own Mountain Road around 5 AM on Friday morning, the 22nd of November.

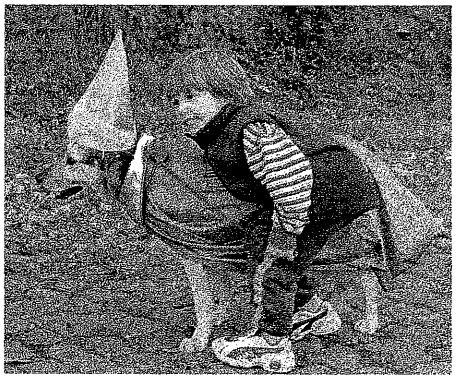
"Brutal senseless violence has happened once again in our community - one time too often. This is the third inci

continued on page 2

HALLOWEEN FUN

That's **Luc Jerndal** with his pet, **Chelsea, the Wizard Dog**. They were some of the participants in the **1st Annual Halloween Dog Parade** that took place on Holland Street on Sunday, October 27th.

Story on Page 2.



ANNUAL FOOD & TOY DRIVE

It's almost that holiday time of year again! RNA is asking its members, friends and neighbors to demonstrate their compassion for the less fortunate members in our community. We are collecting donations of dry and canned food products and/or new and used toys for the Annual Holiday Drive. You can also make a monetary contribution that will be used to purchase either food or toys. (Used toys must be in good working order.)

Contributions should be brought to the November and December monthly meetings. You can also arrange to drop off your contribution in between the meetings or receive more information about the Drive, by calling **Maria Tuzzo** at **(201) 659-2245**.

RNA HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

This year, the annual **Harbor View Holiday Party** will be held on **Wednesday December 4th** from **2:00** to **4:00 PM**. It is an afternoon of fun, music, food and drink - with gifts for all the residents given out by Santa Claus and his helpers. We also intend to have live musical entertainment. The event is RNA's way of thanking our senior neighbors for allowing us to hold our meetings in their residence.

This year, RNA is asking for donations of white socks and large stuffed animals which will be given as gifts to the residents. We are also looking for homemade or store bought cakes and cookies (preferably sugar free). Baked goods should be brought to the facility at the corner of Franklin and Ogden on the day of the party. All food should be in disposable pans or containers.

Finally, we need volunteers to help serve the refreshments. Volunteers are also needed to spend time talking to the residents. Young children are also welcome.

For more information, call **Valerie Rea** at **653-6916** or come to the November meeting to sign up!

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At the November 12th meeting, RNA will also be scheduling dates and organizing for our other holiday events: **Xmas Carolling**, **Park Pavilion Lighting** and the **RNA Holiday Party**.

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All are welcome to the **Holiday Bazaar** sponsored by the **Harbor View Health Facility** on **Sunday, December 8th** on the First floor between the hours of **10:00 AM** to 4:00 PM. Tables are $20.00. For more information, call **Amy** at **(201) 963-1800**. *Volunteers Needed!*

HALLOWEEN PARADE

On Sunday, October 27th, more than twenty dogs arrived in costume for the 1st Annual Halloween Dog Parade on Historic Holland Street! The Dogs Marched the length of the cobbled road to the reggae version of "Who Let the Dogs Out". The Parade was sponsored by ***www.savethepalisades.org***, who provided cookies for kids and dogs. Prizes for "Best in Costume" were donated by ***www.fetchitpetsupplies.com*** and **Groomingdales**.

First Prize for small breed went to Beezus the Hula Pug, sporting a grass skirt and lei around her neck and ankles. First Prize for large breed was given to Diva dressed as Dr. Hannibal Lecter donning chains, a muzzle and a straight jacket.

Additional Pictures of the parade are online at: *http://www.savethepalisades.org/parade/FrameSet.htm*

RECYCLE THIS NEWSLETTER, PASS IT ON TO A FRIEND!

Mountain Road *continued from front page*

dent that has occurred on Mountain Road in the last three years. In September 1997, a local resident and community gardener was beaten, gagged and left for dead. Fortunately he survived and the culprits were apprehended. Then in February 1998, less than six months later, another man was found stabbed to death in a ridiculous lover's quarrel. The culprit was also apprehended in that crime.

"Unfortunately, crime - and violet crime in particular - is part of our urban existence. We must watch where we walk and when we walk and how we walk through our community because certain individuals are always looking for new "prey". The additional problem that this incident highlights is that it might have been prevented if Mountain Road had been open for public use: vehicular and pedestrian traffic and also regular police patrols. Mountain Road has been closed since 1983 and under renovation by the City since June of 1998. In December of that year, a large underground cavern was discovered under a portion of the roadway. All construction was stopped until the City engineers could decide how to support the roadway over this area.

"It took ten months for new plans for a retaining wall to be drawn up and put out to bid to the original contractor, Green Construction. In those ten months, the Road has been allowed to deteriorate back to its original [condition] as a location for all sorts of illegal activities - dumping, drugs, drinking, fighting, graffiti - you name it. . . . . ."

The rest of the 1999 article described the City's "promises" to the community to reopen the Road and make it safe for it's citizens. Well, the Road finally opened and despite the criticism of many residents - new and old alike, the Mountain Road has proved to be a useful conduit for both pedestrians and drivers.

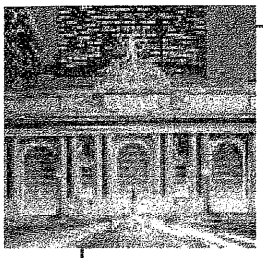
However, one of the promises that the Police have failed to keep is the scheduling of regular, daily patrols - both vehicular and walking. The City has also failed to maintain the area with weekly street-cleaning, garbage removal and landscaping. It also seems appropriate that the City should finally heed the request of our community to install surveillance cameras along the Road.

The article ended by describing a meeting in which the community demanded protection by the City, a leafletting campaign to alert the residents of the dangerous area and a suggestion to contact the media:

"On Tuesday, November 26th, a group of irate community residents met with officials at City Hall to demand that immediate action be taken to remedy this situation.....

"A leafletting campaign was organized to alert everyone in the local neighborhoods about this incident with a suggestion that people call the Jersey Journal (217-2500) and the Mayor's office (547-5200) to express their anger, fear and outrage about this situation."

Maybe it's time to organize again and remind City Hall that their primary responsibility is to protect its citizens from vicious predators.



YOU'RE INVITED ON A TOUR OF GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL

As part of their fundraising efforts for the **Millennium Towers Defense Fund**, RNA and the Coalition for a Better Waterfront (CBW) have organized a private group tour of the magnificent Grand Central Terminal. The Terminal remains one of the most beautiful buildings - a Beaux-Art landmark - in New York City. The tour includes the history of the world's most elegant train station as well as a look at it's major restoration completed in 1998. You will experience the breadth of the Terminal's public spaces such as the Main Concourse, the Main Waiting Room, the original "suburban" train level and the Guastavino tile vaulting within the complex - including the famed Oyster Bar.

The tour is scheduled for **Saturday, November 16th at 1:30 PM** and will last about 1 1/2 to 2 hours. It will start at the Information Booth on the Main Concourse Level. The tour will culminate with refreshments at one of the Terminal's famous restaurants.

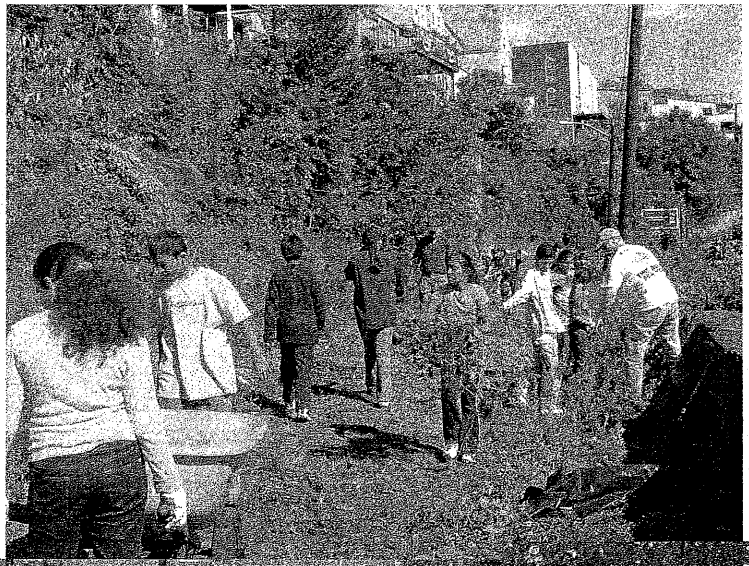
Matt Postal, an architectural historian, will lead the tour. He works as a researcher for New York City's Landmarks Preservation Commission, and has led walking tours of Grand Central Terminal for over a decade.

Everyone interested in participating in this unique event is asked to make a *tax deductible contribution* of **$100.00**. All proceeds will go to pay off the legal bills incurred by RNA and the CBW from their lawsuit to stop the Millennium Towers redevelopment project, consisting of twin 43-story towers, from being built on the Jersey City-Hoboken border.

[For information about this lawsuit, go to: *www.betterwaterfront.com/news/00442001.shtml.*]

Please make checks payable to: **RNA; 232 Ogden Ave., Jersey City, N. J., 07307.**

To make a reservation or for additional information, call **Vito Brunetti** at **(201) 798-0493.**

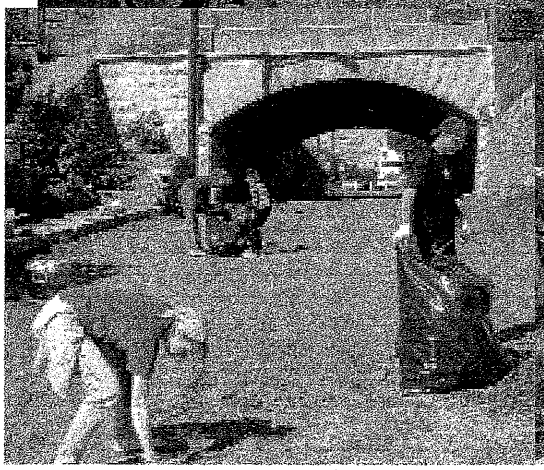


Fall Clean-Up

This year the focus of the annual fall clean up was historic **Holland Street**. On September 28th, over seventy children and adults gathered to plant bulbs in the terraces, remove dumping debris and clean out the weeds and dirt along the sides of one of the City's last cobble-stoned roads. Thanks to the **Department of Public Works** for moving the concrete barriers back in place at the base of the Street (where it meets Paterson Plank Road) to prevent the illegal dumping.

RNA, ***www.savethepalisades.org*** and the **Jersey City Landmarks Conservancy** would like to thank all the friends and neighbors that made this clean up the most successful ever!

[*Unfortunately, there still has been no date set for Holland Street's historic designation to be heard by the Planning Board.*]



COMMUNITYUPDATES

ROOF TOP TENNIS COURT: Several Ogden Avenue neighbors have filed an appeal to the Board of Adjustment in order to stop the erection of a rooftop tennis court at 117-119 Mountain Road (234-236 Ogden Avenue), a large "residential" property owned by **Norman Wilson**. They have retained **Michael Kates**, a prominent attorney to represent them in this matter. The hearing is scheduled for **Thursday, November 14th** at City Hall, starting at 6:00 PM.

GATEWAY: There were two recent developments regarding the lawsuit initiated by the **Hudson County Alliance** against this two 17 story towers project being built at 101 Marshall Street in Hoboken. On Friday, November 1st, there was a scheduling conference in court between the HCA and the developers, regarding the **North Hudson Sewerage Authority**'s approval of the project's sewer hookup.

And on Monday, November 4th, the **Appellate Division** started reviewing the appeals of HCA, the City Council of Hoboken and the City of Jersey City to reinstate their complaints against this project.

HCA is having a **Legal Fundraiser** on **Thursday, November 14th**. The event will take place at 1021 Grand Street in the penthouse apartment of Kamber/Graham and starts at 7:00 PM. Please RSVP by November 12, 2002 to **Liz Markevitch: 201-217-4122 / info@zenergy1.com.**

MEETING MINUTES:

[*The following summaries are reports of the previous two RNA meetings in September and October.*]

Tuesday, September 8, 2002

The September meeting started at 7:40 PM. The first speaker of the night was **Ronald Clemente**, our local NID officer, who updated the group regarding several problems in our community. He stated that he would place a work order to replace the highway barricades at the bottom of Holland Street and Paterson Plank Road. He informed the group that the property located at 250 Ogden Avenue is not being maintained (ie: the possible need for soil remediation because of the removal of an undergournd oil tank; removal of the overgrown curbside tree and the need to properly board up the building) because it is owned by mortgage company located in Texas and there appears to be no local contact in our area. A complaint was made that the backyard at 262 Ogden Avenue had overgrown weeds and there was a tarp collecting water which has caused concern among the neighbors because it is a potential breeding ground for bugs. He took new complaints, specifically regarding a new round of dumping on Ravine Road and the chronic problem with absentee landlords not properly maintaining their properties.

The second speaker was Police Officer **Lorenzo Tosado** who took complaints about illegal drug activities relocating from Franklin Street to Cuneo Place and large groups of young adults (15 to 25 year olds) loitering in our area. He was also informed of the persistent problem of crowds of young people congregating at the pavilion of Riverview-Fisk Park from 11 PM till 4:30 AM. Another complaint was made regarding suspicious looking strangers on Palisade Avenue acting as if they are "casing" buildings.

Next there were updates about current community projects. Member **Gale Sasson** gave a brief report regarding a pocket park at Cornelison and Summit Avenues that the City wants to sell to a developer. She asked for RNA's support by signing a petition to keep this land as public open space. **Becky Hoffman** gave an update on the community's fight to stop the construction of two 17 story residential towers at 101 Marshall Street in Hoboken. Superior Court **Judge Arthur D'talia** denied Hudson County Alliance's order to show cause for a temporary injunction to stop construction. He also dismissed six of the seven counts in the HCA's lawsuit and dismissed the lawsuits of both Hoboken and Jersey City in their entirety. All three plaintiffs have filed an appeal in the Appellate Division to reinstate their lawsuits and issue the injunction.

RNA Chair **Clif Steinbring** updated the meeting on the new Cliff Side project proposed for the old Koven building below the Palisade cliff. The biggest concern is that the project would violate the recently enacted Steep Slope Ordinance in several ways. The main problem is that the two new floors to be added onto the existing structure would violate the height restrictions of the Palisade Preservation Overlay District (PPOD). In addition, the developer's proposal to make the eastern entrance to Mountain Road a two way intersection - just to accommodate the residential traffic flow - would be a traffic nightmare. The problem is that the developer's traffic study does not take into account the already strained changes that New Jersey Transit is currently constructing for its Light Rail system on Paterson Plank Road.

Next, the membership voted for RNA to support an appeal to the Board of Adjustment to stop a roof top tennis court from being built at 117-119 Mountain Road.

Holland Street was the next topic of discussion. RNA designated this cobble-stoned cliff road as the area for the community's annual fall clean-up, scheduled for Saturday, September 28th. The group voted to approve up to $100.00 for clean-up expenses. Organizers asked for volunteers to show up at 9:00 AM to begin the clean-up and fall planting of bulbs. It was also announced that the City's Historic Preservation Commission was scheduled to vote for historic designation for the Street on September 16th.

November Saturday, November 16th was selected as the date for RNA's annual holiday party for the Harbor View residents. The group voted to approve up to $200.00 for party expenses. **Valerie Rea**, one of the event organizers, asked for volunteers and donations of refreshments for the party.

The meeting ended at 9:10 PM.

Tuesday, October 10, 2002

The meeting started at 7:30 PM. **Valerie Rea** announced that the Harbor view party was rescheduled for Wednesday, December 4th at 1:30 PM. she asked for donations of tube socks, toiletries and baked goods.

Ronald Clemente, the Heights NID manager updated the group on the status of the complaints made at last month's meeting. He informed the group that the contaminated soil had been removed from 122-124 Ogden Avenue and the City permitted the new construction to resume. Some of the new complaints made to Mr. Clemente, included: an abandoned air conditioner dumped on the corner of Ferry Street and Ogden; two menacing dogs let out in front of 375 Ogden all the time; and the sewers on Ogden between Bowers and South needed cleaning.

The next speaker was **Lieut. Robert Kilduf** of the North District Police, who gave the membership an update on the crime statistics in our community. Plainclothes officers made 18 drug arrests recently. Unfortunately, the number of burglaries did not decrease from the last period. The recent summer in Riverview-Fisk Park was better than anticipated and the night time curfew was biggest deterrent in keeping the Park free from gatherings of undesirable individuals. The mobile police van was not used during the hottest parts of the summer but would be back - if needed - during the winter months. A grateful resident publicly thanked the police for resolving a bad situation on Bower Street.

Mayor Glenn Cunningham was then introduced as our guest speaker. The Mayor in turn, then introduced his various aides and department directors that accompanied him to the meeting. He started his talk with the announcement that the next budget will not contain any municipal tax increase. He also stated that the original Newport tax abatement will soon expire so that part of the waterfront development will be paying its full share of the property taxes.

In the area of crime, he announced that there had been a 27% decrease in homicides and a 500% increase in drug arrests, including 3400 arrests citywide. The Mayor then turned to *quality of life* issues, including Parks maintenance, recreation activities and street repairs. At this point, RNA publicly thanked the Mayor for his support against the Gateway project at 101 Marshall Street in Hoboken and having the City join in the lawsuit to stop the two 17 story towers project. The Mayor responded that in the future, Jersey City had to be on better guard in keeping its eyes on development in adjacent municipalities, especially when it affected Jersey City residents.

The Mayor then returned to his list of priorities for fixing up Jersey City, including: the repaving of the 10 worst streets in each ward; the repairing of Leonard Gordon Park and the long awaited completion of the 1990 renovation of our own Riverview-Fisk Park, as part of the next capital improvement budget; and the improving of shelter facilities and support groups for the homeless. He also announced the dedication of the new firehouse facility located at Palisade Avenue and Congress Street would take place on Friday, October 11th.

The Mayor indicated that he supported the location of a tower for broadcast television reception adjacent to Liberty State Park because of the commercial revenue it would provide to the City. He reiterated his commitment to negotiating free parking at the Newport Mall. He also announced his support of the Steep Slope Ordinance that would help to protect our landmark Palisade cliffs.

At this point of the meeting, the Mayor introduced his aides who addressed specific concerns of the membership, including tree trimming in Riverview-Fisk Park; restoration of electricity to the Park pavilion; cars parking too close to the corners of the block; better testing of the water quality at City pools; panhandlers at the intersection near the Doric Apartments; and the building of a rooftop tennis court at 234-236 Ogden Avenue. The Mayor promised that his office would check on all of these complaints and try to have an answer by our next meeting in November.

The meeting concluded at 8:5 PM.

Maria Tuzzo, Secretary

BULLETIN BOARD

VISIT *savethepalisades.org*

POLICE BEAT: 201-547-5477

Report any problems, safety concerns or knowledge of a criminal or suspicious activity to the police radio room at the above number. Leave your name, telephone number, street address, the nature of the problem, an accurate description of the individual(s) and/or vehicle involved and date and time of the message. All call will be strictly confidential. To report drug dealing, contact the **Narcotics Unit** at **(201) 547-5391**. Call **911** for all health, safety or criminal emergencies.

RECYCLE GARBAGE & DISPOSABLES - IT'S THE LAW!

The **Incinerator Authority** recycles the following materials:
PAPER: newspapers, magazines, junk mail, school and office paper, computer paper, telephone books, cardboard/corrugated boxes, cereal boxes, pasta boxes, laundry detergent boxes
PLASTICS: milk cartons, drink boxes, plastic milk containers, food containers, household cleaner containers, laundry detergent bottles, shampoo bottles
GLASS: soda bottles, beer bottles, food jars, liquor bottles
CANS: aluminum, tin, steel (no chemical or paint cans)

WEDNESDAY is our neighborhood pick-up day for recycling. For more information, call **(201) 432-4645**.

Contribute to Your Community Newsletter

Send your articles, opinions, announcements, poems and recipes to: RNA, 469 Palisade Avenue or to: *RNA@gitch.net.* Next deadline is: **November 22nd.**

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Support RNA by paying your annual membership dues of **$7.00 per person** at the November 12th meeting or sending a check, payable to RNA, to 232 Ogden Avenue.

Membership entitles you to the monthly newsletter and voting privileges, if you live within the RNA boundaries. RNA's boundaries are **Ogden** and **Palisade Avenues** from **Cuneo Place** to **Congress Street.**

FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

HAPPY THANKSGIVING
Please Give Generously
to the Annual RNA
FOOD AND TOY DRIVE

RIVERVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
469 PALISADE AVENUE
JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY 07307

COME TO THE NEXT RNA MEETING ON
NOVEMBER 12TH AT 7:15 PM
AT THE HARBOR VIEW HEALTH CARE FACILITY
GET INVOLVED & MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

CR-28
Vito Brunetti
232 Ogden Avenue
Jersey City, NJ 07307

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COMING EVENTS

RNA MEETING:
Tuesday, November 12th at 7:15 PM
Location:HarborView Health Care Ctr.
AGENDA:
1) *Murder on Mountain Road*: Police Representatives: Capt. Jos. Pizzelanti & Lieut. Robert Kilduff of North District
2) *Cliff-Side Project*: Latest proposal from the Developers
3) *Planning for Holiday Events*

APPEAL of ROOF-TOP TENNIS COURT
Thursday, November 14th at 6:00 PM
Location: Board of Adjustment, City Hall, 280 Grove Street

HCA FUNDRAISER to FIGHT GATEWAY
Thursday, November 14th at 7:00 PM
Location:1021 Grand Street, Hoboken
Contact: Liz Markevitch: (201)217-4122

GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL TOUR
Saturday, November 16th at 1:30 PM
Location:Grand Central Terminal,N.Y.C.
Fund Raiser for Millennium Towers Defense Fund
Contact: Vito Brunetti: (201) 798-0493

HARBOR VIEW HOLIDAY PARTY
Wednesday, December 4th at 2:00 PM
Volunteers, baked goods and gift donations needed.
Contact: Valerie Rea: (201) 653-6916

HOLIDAY BAZAAR
Sunday, December 8th from10AM to 4 PM
Location:HarborView Health Care Ctr.
Volunteers Needed! Tables: $20.00.
Contact: Amy: (201) 963-1800

Palisade Ave., showing Trolley Station and Public Service Building
Jersey City, N. J. (Postcard, date unknown)